

THE
L I F E
OF
Miss Nano Nagle,
AS SKETCHED
BY THE RIGHT REV. DR. COPPINGER
IN A
FUNERAL SERMON
PREACHED BY HIM IN CORK,
ON THE
Anniversary of her Death.

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THE LIFE OF
MISS NANO NAGLE

“LET HER WORKS PRAISE HER IN THE GATE”
PROVERBS, 31 CH. 31

THE divine Wisdom commends here in the best strain of encomium that female excellence, who could happily execute the most extensive plans, be strictly faithful at the same time to the minutest detail of domestic duty; uniting the menial offices of a careful housewife with the enlarged views of enterprising commerce; administering every comfort to her family at home, while she labours for their opulence, and their prosperity abroad; benevolent and by night assiduous to serve them; generous to the poor, doated on by her children, she is praised with strength and beauty, *and shall laugh in the latter day.* But where, says the Wise Man, such a Woman be found? She is invaluable *and from the uttermost coasts is her price.** Praise due to her from all, but her good works shall effectually extol her: *let her works praise her in the Gate.*

When this character was first held forth to admiration, the merits of a Redeemer had not entered

d the treasures of Grace, nor burnished the
 of the Faithful with the gold of perfection;
 reserved for the Law of Grace to exhibit in
 age many living examples of sublimer virtue.
 aliant woman recorded in the Book of Pro-
 had promoted the temporal interest of her fa-
 but what glory must be reserved for her, who,
 ling upon all the enjoyments, which this world
 afford, contemplates with tender sympathy
 irtual wants of the poor, and dedicates her
 life to the good of her fellow-creatures? As
 generating of man by the effusion of the Holy
 transcends the material separation of light
 darkness, so does the noble project that grasps
 irtual wants of mankind, and the exertions
 tend to alleviate, or prevent them, surpass in
 the temporal views, and the domestic toils of
 reat female, whom the pen of Wisdom hath
 depicted. A woman employed from her tender
 in exploring the moral world, in bewailing the
 of ignorance and irreligion, in labouring zea-
 to obviate and counteract them, dispensing
 ple fortune so liberally among the poor, that
 harity seemed to alienate it from herself, is a
 ous object indeed, calculated to awake the fer-
 of the age she adorns, and make virtue still
 amiable. That the worthy woman, whom we
 lay particularly commemorate, and whose loss
 ciety we must ever deplore, was raised up by
 e Providence for that salutary end, will appear
 manifestly in the detail of her life, which I
 now proceed to lay before you.

NANO NAGLE was born in the County of Cork, at *Ballygriffin*, the family seat of *Garrett Nagle, Esq.* her father, descended himself of an opulent and respectable ancestry; her mother's name was *Mathew*, of the family of *Thomastown*; both of them less distinguished by their genteel extraction, than by the general edification of their good example. Under such auspices, and with such promising dispositions as this child was blessed with, there was every reason to expect that she would one day be an ornament to society. Her infant sallies, however, were animated with so great a share of spirits, as often to draw upon her the corrective countenance of her pious mother, who, to inculcate the earliest lessons of female decorum, deemed it necessary to discourage this vivacity, and would therefore withhold from this child the indulgences which she usually granted to her other children; while the more discerning eye of the Father discovered in the festive boundings of this dear lamb the first exertions of an elevated soul, and on these occasions he emphatically declared, that "Poor *Nano* would be a Saint yet." When she had gone through the rudiments of female education, she was sent for the politer accomplishments to Paris, and, being gifted with superior talents, fulfilled in every particular the expectations of her friends, uniting with an agreeable person the most engaging manners, and the more lasting attractions of a cultivated mind. Destined by the Almighty to reclaim and edify thousands, to shew forth in her own person to this degenerate age, that the gay world may be tasted,
known.

known, and despised, that the most fascinating scenes shall wither to the eye of reflection ; she was, at the desire of her friends, introduced to the brilliant circles of this fashionable Metropolis ; its various amusements were displayed before her, which she on her part did not fail to relish : her unsuspecting innocence seeing nothing in all this to disturb its calm, she floated along remorseless for some months upon the tide of pleasure, 'till at length that dangerous quiet was happily disturbed. As she returned one morning from a Ball, she observed some poor people at the gate of a Church, waiting for admittance at this early hour, to adore in his temple the Great Author of their being. The circumstance was trivial in appearance, but being pointed with a sting of Divine Grace it made the deepest impresson ; she was edified and confounded at the sight ; she compared her situation with theirs ; she was shocked to think, that while the first fruits of their day were thus worthily dedicated, she should be obliged to consume in unseasonable sleep the same precious moments. The charms of dissipation, which had of late so captivated her, that she supposed it impossible to enjoy life without them, lost much of their ascendancy on this occasion : nor did her remorse stop here ; it alarmed her upon the very dominion which the gay world had already assumed in her heart ; it brought her to acknowledge, that a heart made for God himself, with a capacity which nothing but the possession of an infinite good can fill, could not be divided without injustice, nor alienated without impiety. The same train of thought led her gradually

gradually to despise what a short time before she had deemed so desirable, and her contempt for a dissipated life was instantly followed by the most settled disgust for it. Like *Judith* she passed through the camp of a licentious enemy, un sullied, and unhurt; she turned the sword of her tyrant against himself, and slew him daringly in his own tent, the allurements employed to destroy her becoming in her hands the arms of her victory. But while we admire the miracle, let us not presume to expect it.

She was now called home, where her attention was soon engaged by very different objects, the ignorance of the lower classes here, their consequent immorality, and the ruin of their souls. For being invited to a friend's house in her father's neighbourhood, and passing some time there, she was struck with the sentiments of his poor tenants, with whom her affable disposition led her occasionally to converse. The favourite subject was the business of Salvation, our duty to God, and the great mysteries of Religion. But how was she afflicted to perceive, that these poor creatures were almost absolute strangers to every thing she questioned them about! Under a misconception of their obligations, they substituted error in the place of truth: while they kept up an attachment to certain exterior observances, they were totally devoid of the spirit of Religion; their fervour was superstitious, their faith was erroneous, their hope was presumptuous, and they had no charity. Licentiousness, while it could bless itself, and tell the beads, could live without remorse, and die without

without repentance : sacraments and sacrileges went hand in hand, and conscience was at rest upon its own stings. By the plainest analogy she had every reason to fear, that the evil was not confined to the poor immediately around her. She turned the matter in her thoughts, she meditated profoundly upon it, she traced it to posterity through all its probable consequences. Idleness, dishonesty, impiety, drunkenness like spectres stalked before her ; but for the present she could only sigh at the prospect. It was still constantly before her eyes ; no company, no employment, no pleasure, no pain, could mitigate her anxiety for this poor people : had she thousands at her disposal, she would gladly have expended them in remedying the miseries she beheld ; but not having the means to repair this ruin, she determined to withdraw from the sight of it, and deplore it during her life within the walls of a Convent. She took leave of her friends, bidding them, as she then imagined, a last farewell, and returned to France to pass the rest of her days in religious retirement. But the poor Irish still rushed on her mind ; their spiritual necessities haunted her unremittingly ;—thousands of tender babes seemed to implore her assistance : she could not get rid of the importunate idea :—she wept—she prayed—she consulted—she sought advice from the most eminent for their experience, their learning, and their piety : she laid open the agitation of her mind, her settled disgust for the world, her ardent desire for the religious state, her feelings for the poor of her own country, her strong propensity to contribute to their relief :
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that from the first moment she discovered their ignorance, she could never divest herself of the thought. But she attributed all to her own weak imagination; that, as matters then stood, it was morally impossible for her to be of service to them. The Penal restraints were an insuperable bar; she had no pecuniary resources at the time; her constitution was delicate; the exposing of herself again to the dangers of the world upon so wretched a prospect of success was hazardous in the extreme; yet she felt herself most strongly impelled to it, nor could she turn her thoughts to any other object. When she had thus laid down her load of uneasiness, and given full vent to her conflict, far from being encouraged by them to embrace the religious state, they unanimously declared, that to instruct poor children in Ireland was doubtless the object of her vocation; that her profound humility, her solid judgment, the steadiness of her virtue, aided by divine grace, would be ample protection against the dangers of the world; that though her fortune was not then extensive, her opulent connections may one day possibly augment it; that to co-operate with Christ in saving many souls, was certainly more glorious, than to confine her efforts to the saving of her own; that so generous an example must have its share of influence; that though the laws might prevent her from doing as much as she wished, they could not prevent her from doing what lay in her power. She replied—she argued—she remonstrated;—but no to purpose: their decision was not to be changed. So having no resource, she at length yields; she sacrifices inclina-

ation to duty ; she returns again to Ireland, to fertilize this vineyard ; a salutary cloud ! exhaled here by the sun of justice, borne by divine grace to a religious atmosphere, impregnated with the purest virtue, wafted back by charity to her native soil to diffuse an odour of sanctity, and dissolve in showers of beneficence !

Her father was now dead, whose fortune and consequence would have been an encouragement to her ; the laws were severely pointed against the plan she had in view ; clashing with the Chartered Establishments it was particularly obnoxious to them. Besides this, *perpetual imprisonment* was posted, we may say, upon the confines of ignorance to keep away the light, and seize upon those, who should venture to instruct us. Were even that penalty limited to herself, she would readily have risked it ; but 'twas possible that her friends also might be brought into difficulties, or perhaps that a general persecution might involve the Catholics of the kingdom. For though such apprehensions are groundless at present, at that time there was but too much room for them : so that she had still to encounter the censure of her friends, the shafts of worldly prudence, the sneers of ill-nature, and all that was disgusting in the probable failure of her design : with this she had against her the weakness of her frame, unequal in all appearance to the painful undertaking. She was seized with a spitting of blood at her very first onset ; but how discouraging soever the field before her was, she felt that it contained the Evangelical treasure, that

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the kingdom of Heaven was hidden there, and she resolved at all events to purchase it: *she hath considered a field, and bought it.** She felt the loss of many souls, a prey to the miseries of ignorance; she lamented the silence of these pulpits, where wisdom should have cried aloud, and zeal should have thundered with all its energy; she grieved to behold the tribunals of penance as cautiously concealed, as the transgressions deposited in them: she was shocked to see the word of God chained down in injustice, and the little ones crying for this bread, while there were none to break it to them:—with such incentives and difficulties could deter her. She entered on the great work, and Dublin, where her mother resided, was blessed with the opening of her mission. She began with about thirty children, for whose accommodation she hired a private room, with a mistress to take care of them. But from her having since often declared, that she was absolutely terrified at their wickedness, we are warranted to suppose, that the vulgar world in miniature was delineated in this little assembly; that oaths, imprecations, resentment, envy and dishonesty were very common among them, which only proved to her how much they needed her attention, and that without patience, and prayer and perseverance she could never hope to make lasting impression.

How much then must this plan have cost her at the beginning, and what merit must she not have ac-

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* Proverbs, Chap. 31, Verse 16.

quired by her invariable pursuit of it during the whole course of her life ! We know well that speculation is in general a deceitful medium ; that practice will exhibit difficulties, which in theory did not seem to exist. When therefore a youthful female imagination, untutored by experience, and fraught with pious zeal, lights upon a favourite enterprize, the final success is always more present to it, than the intermediate obstacles, and consequently the extent of expectation becomes the measure of disappointment. Now as it is highly probable that our generous novice, before she embarked in this undertaking, persuaded herself, that she had nothing else than simple innocence to work upon, that the docile hearts of her pupils would imbibe her instructions as fast as she could possibly communicate them, that their tender dispositions would readily bend to every thing she desired, that her will would be a law to them, and her frown the only necessary coercion ; how mortifying after this to discover, that these flattering hopes were premature ! The stupidity of some was proof against every instruction ; the very same lesson repeated during months, and every day in these months was neither retained, nor understood ; the levity of others was not to be fixed ; what she was most earnest in enforcing, they were perhaps least disposed to observe ; the stubborn rudeness of others was an overmatch for her mildness ; to say nothing of the infected air she had to breathe in a confined room, from the nauseousness of their rags, and from their nastiness. Yet these difficulties, far from regarding her, were, on the contrary, a stimulative to her

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her exertions: she persisted with such intemperate application, that a consumption threatened her life, and, forcing her to moderate this assiduity, happily preserved her to the world. But as gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable souls in the furnace of tribulation, the Almighty thought proper about this time to lean heavily upon her. To no less a trial was her resignation now put, than the double loss of a mother and a sister. The former had ever cherished and directed her; the latter, who was a model of piety, had assisted, and edified her. God would have it so—and as he was the centre of her affections, he was he her comfort in the present calamity.—She did not give way to the vain effusions of grief, she calmly submitted to his Divine Will, kissing the rod which he had raised to scourge her. But no longer stay in Dublin, circumstanced as she then was, became impracticable; so she took leave of her charge, and came down to her brothers, who then resided in the City of Cork.

Here let us pause, to raise our hearts in thanks to the Father of Mercies for the precious gift which on that day he bestowed upon us. Destined by him to teach his ways to the unjust, to convert sinners, to stem the torrent of vice, to comfort the widow, to protect the orphan, to relieve the distressed, he qualified her eminently for these great purposes, and overlooking our demerits he conducted her to us.

The complexion of the times at her coming hither is in the memory of this congregation: I advert to them

them for no other reason, than to enlarge your ideas of her fortitude : For, awful as they were, they could not deter her from prosecuting her scheme. But if she was hitherto limited to the *will* of being charitable, she was now gratified with abundant means of charity ; she found herself possessed of a large fortune, which the death of an uncle had thrown into her hands, with power to dispense it as the glory of God may require.

All her discretion was then necessary : Roman Catholic schools of every sort were watched with a jealous eye : persecution hung over them, and heavy legal penalties. To look for the countenance of her friends, or to rely on their protection would have been vain, and useless ; they would never concur, nor was it in their power to protect her. It was necessary to screen herself from even their observation. Yet though her measures were so frankly concerted, that schools were opened at each end of this city, where as many poor children were received, as she could bring together, though the masters were under her own eye, for she visited her schools alternately every day, teaching and catechising in them for hours together, she was neither noticed by her own family, nor interrupted by the malice of informers : like the pillar of fire, which God gave to his people in the desert, she cheered these little ones, she pointed out the way, she raised their minds to Heaven, a shining light for them, and darkness for those who would impede their progress. The veil was at length drawn back accidentally—a
petition

petition at her brother's door discovered her occupation, but not 'till sufficient time had elapsed to prove to her friends, that a persecution for her attempt was very unlikely to fall upon the consummate prudence, which conducted it : for having now subsisted several months, no person had attempted to molest her. But indeed the lash of the Law could scarcely have galled her so much as the displeasure of her relatives on making this discovery. Her misguided zeal, her shameful indiscretion, her inconsiderate piety were, we may suppose, the constant subject of their vehement reprehensions. For her part, she was not to be scared by every phantom; she was fully convinced, that something should be hazarded for these poor creatures; she persuaded herself, that malice would blush to prosecute in such a cause, or that, if she were attacked, common sense and common humanity would effectually plead for her. She went on then, and she prospered. She never spared herself, nor suffered any inconvenience to prevent her personal attendance. She acquired strength from her very fatigues; her constitution sprung up anew as from its own ashes, and she certainly was hardier now, than at any former period. The parching heats of summer, the piercing cold of winter had no effect on her; the schools were her shade, and her refreshment. How often have we seen her passing with steady composure through the rigours of every season to tend her little flock? How often have we seen her after a well spent day, returning through the darkness of the night, dripping with rain, mingled in the bustling crowd, moving thoughtful

thoughtfully along by the faint glimmering of a stretched lantern, withholding from herself in this manner the necessaries of life to administer the comforts of it to others. The seasons however, as they changed, occasionally spared her: her own regularity, as it did not change, was never permitted to spare her. The same laborious occupations recurred every day, and no day could charge her with ever having flinched from them. For the first years after her arrival, conforming to the habits of the family she lived with, she was of their parties both at home and with their friends; but as often as such a sacrifice was required, her daily devotions, and the visits of her schools were always carefully discharged beforehand: these were on no account to be omitted. But then where did she appear in company that she did not edify! interesting in conversation—dignified in her address—she was neither little in her affability, insipid in her mildness, nor austere in her gravity: she never obtruded these harsh features, where rank pride in the garb of female society is so apt to descant upon the faults of others: her lessons were confined to her schools: her example spoke for her in all other places. Detraction was confounded in her presence, because the character of a neighbour was known to be dear to her: delicacy was silent before her, because the lustre of her virtue overawed it. The squandering of time at the card-table she did not rail at:—she retired to her devotions while others were thus employed, and taught them more movingly the value of it. But she gradually withdrew from every intercourse of this

this sort, paying no visits except where charity conducted her, and bestowing the moments it left at her disposal upon the interests of her soul in the exercise of compunction, and prayer. The chapel, the schools, and her apartment for the rest of her life divided her presence between them. At chapel every day during the divine sacrifice how unaffected in her appearance!—silent—motionless—absorpt in recollection!—a lively transcript of her own perfect faith, and a new motive of credibility to all those that beheld her. In her schools ever laborious, patient, vigilant, and judicious, she studied the dispositions of her uncouth pupils, the degree of capacities they possessed; she adapted her instructions accordingly: she watched their countenances, which long experience had taught her to read, and proceeded or turned back, or explained, or repeated, as she found them impressed with what she said. To such as were preparing for the Sacraments, and to all others during the Lent she explained the great truths of religion for five successive hours every day without the smallest intermission. Then after her plain frugal refecton she would retire to her evening devotion which she performed in her apartment, where in converse with the Great Teacher of truth she advanced in the science of the Saints, and renewed her fervour for the day ensuing. In these heavenly communications it was, that she conceived that noble idea of doing good for ages, by perpetuating the work she had begun; and, having a fortune at her disposal she thought it could not be more usefully employed than in establishing some permanent institution for

the education of the poor in this country. Her wish was to unite, if possible, a certain number of females in a league of religion, who should dedicate themselves totally to this desirable object, and be provided for upon so solid a footing, as may secure such labours to futurity. The providence of Almighty God was employing for us here at that time the ardent zeal, the great abilities, and the exemplary virtues of the Rev. Mr. *Doran*, whose name alone was a panegyrick, whose memory must be in benediction while ever Cork shall have inhabitants. To him she had recourse; she submitted her intentions to him with that humble distrust of her own lights, which always distinguished her. To you also, My Lord,* who were ever high in her esteem, and who enjoyed a large share of her confidence, she looked to on this occasion. The circumstance is too much connected with our present purpose, to be passed over; and if the simple fact be now an encomium, it is the spirit of Miss Nagle that bestows it. She disclosed her sentiments to you, requesting your concurrence in that very interesting deliberation, which introduced a Religious Order into this City, engaged by solemn vow to labour in the improvement of the weaker sex. The numberless advantages likely to arise from it preponderated in the scale of your Lordship's feelings, and easily reconciled you to the fatigues, which the accomplishment of the plan had apportioned to you. These fatigues, for

* The Right Rev. Doctor *Moylan*, Roman Catholic Bishop of Cork.

for very obvious reasons, I shall not detail in the presence of your Lordship: the record is indelibly preserved in the bosom of gratitude, where late posterity shall devoutly read it. I shall only say, that you exerted yourself so happily in this business both here and on the Continent, that nothing remained to be completed but a proper mansion to receive these Ladies.

But many serious obstacles started up to oppose it—I shall spare your pious ears a recital of selfish narrow, envious machinations from a quarter where they could not be supposed to originate: the recital may offend—it cannot edify. I will tell you rather that she was opposed by herself. Must not her own sensibility have deprecated the measure? Did not movingly represent to her the many pitiable objects who had hitherto depended upon her bounty? The disconsolate widows, these forlorn orphans, the reduced housekeepers, these superannuated tradesmen, whose various afflictions she assuaged, whose tears she dried up, whose wants she so often satisfied where shall they turn, what now shall become of them? What must she not have felt, when her imagination pictured them pleading their grievances before her! Who, said they, will have pity on our distress, if you will not henceforth look to us? By whom can we expect to be relieved, if you now relinquish the power to relieve us? So long in possession of your liberality, shall we now without any fault of ours be deprived of it?—The remonstrance was

certainly affecting, and if, Gentlemen,* your well known humanity had not furnished her with an answer—if the interests of the community at large had not outweighed this plea of the poor, it would have been resistless, and unanswerable. Another most formidable difficulty opposed her in the alarm which this enterprize occasioned; for there could be but little hopes that so questionable a thing as a convent would ever be tolerated here, when a council could gravely deliberate upon the very dangerous tendency of suffering *a few pious women to drink their tea, and say their prayers together*. But, thank God! Religious prejudice, almost exhausted from watching, soon after fell asleep, and liberality openly patronised the infant establishment. This large pile was in a short time quietly completed, and has since that very amply repaid the indulgence, by causing thousands to circulate here, which would otherwise have been expended in a foreign land.

When she had now, as she fondly hoped, overcome her contradictions, how trying to her fortitude was it, that after all her trouble, after all her exertence, her new institute was by no means adapted to the end she had proposed! She expected that her school would instantly flourish when such accomplished assistants were to carry on the work; that where her single exertions were able to animate it hitherto, the united powers of persons so well disposed, and so highly qualified would give it the greatest

* The Amicable Society.

greatest perfection. It pleased the Almighty to dispose matters otherwise. Her efforts, though they did not directly go to what she fixed her heart on yet were thrown into a channel of much greater importance. Her aim in all she had done was to reform the poor; but God was pointing it to reclaim the opulent, and with more general advantage; for where piety in a poor woman shall edify her own house, piety in a rich woman shall edify the houses of hundreds. We need but consider the great influence of the sex, to be convinced, that judicious education of the genteeler class of female is highly interesting to the world. When their hearts are early moulded by the hand of religion when their talents are turned to useful knowledge the consequence must be, that engaging manners unaffected delicacy, gentleness and sweetness will embellish their personal attractions, while sound sense solid judgment, and agreeable conversation, shall enhance their mental acquirements. Those, who would win their affections, must then be more rationally accomplished, than they need be at present: they must have more virtue, more honour, and better conduct, than the world is now apt to deem necessary. Generations yet unborn must profit by an improved education of the higher ranks of female both for the reasons alledged, and because their children's disposition will take the bent from them. The worthy foundress however, disappointed, as she was, in her favourite plan, was far from abandoning it, or relaxing in the pursuit. Having still a much left, as might endow a second establishment

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he generously undertook one, and with the more complacency, as it was better calculated to benefit the poor. Her disinterested zeal, her edifying example shortly attracted associates, with whom, after her unemitted assiduity hitherto, she now tied herself down by vow to labour for the rest of her pilgrimage.

This second house being completed about the close of the year 1777, was opened on Christmas-day, in honor of the Infant God, with a most uncommon act of hospitality, not dictated, as you will see, by human prudence, though not less admirable in itself, nor less acceptable to him, in whose honour she had prepared the entertainment. Fifty beggars were the company invited. She did not sit at the head of her table to do the honours of it in the usual way; but she brought in the first dish with her own hands, stood behind their chairs while they enjoyed themselves at dinner, and helped to attend them as their menial servant; her faith strongly representing to her the great Patron of the poor, who on that day made his first appearance among men, and who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. She observed this same ceremony every Christmas-day while she lived, which custom is since faithfully kept up by the Ladies of her house, as it is to be while ever their Community shall have an existence.

From the constant edification of Miss Nagle's preceding life, you are not perhaps, inclined to expect, that her conduct as a Religious can be much more edifying; but *the path of the just, like a shining light,*
goeth

goeth forwards, and entreateth even unto perfect day.

The evening of this great woman was the brightest part of her course. Her humility, her regularity, her application to prayer, her mortification were never before so conspicuous. A full conviction of her own weakness made her loath so strikingly the very semblance of applause, that the most cringing adulation was ashamed to offer it to her; not that she made a display of humility, as others do, by a coy refusal of compliment, or that cobweb cant of self-dispraise, which is mostly thrown out to be read backward: the tenor of her life proved her's to be genuine. What was said of her Divine Master, may in this instance, be truly applied to herself. When she was reviled, she did not revile, but abandoned her character to those, who impeached her unjustly. I shall be scarcely credited; but, to the shame of the persons concerned, it is an incontrovertible fact, that while this good woman was bestowing her substance, and herself also in charity to the poor, she has received the most opprobrious insults from some of the inhabitants of this city. She has been bitterly cursed in our streets as a mere impostor; she has been charged with having squandered her money upon the building of houses for the sole purpose of getting a name, and with deceiving the world by her throng of beggar's brats: Has it not even been said, that her schools were a seminary of prostitution? These with many other insults which we know nothing of, she patiently bore, and there is great reason to believe,

believe, that her humility would never have permitted even these to transpire, had she not deemed it a duty to prepare by these instances the Ladies of her house for the same humiliating treatment. As to her regularity, the invariable discipline of thirty years bears ample testimony to it. I never could learn, nor do I believe there was a single day's interruption for amusement, relaxation, or wordly business during the whole term. To form an idea of the spirit, that animated her prayer, you must be told a circumstance, which her death alone disclosed to her pious companions. In paying the last attentions to her dead body, they found that her knees had been long in a state of ulceration, and then only could they account for the uneasiness, which she appeared to struggle with during this exercise.—What anguish must she not have felt, while from five o'clock in the morning until nine these excoriated joints were daily applied to the ground! What renewed pangs, when her evening devotions were as regularly prolonged in the same unaltered posture! At Christmas during her spiritual retreat of eight or ten days, which she made every year, and on Holy Thursday nights, which she spent on her knees in presence of the Most Adorable Sacrament 'till morning, what pain must she not have felt! And how dead at the same time to herself, when these feelings are denied that lowest of all comforts—permission to complain!

It should seem, that in the midst of punishments like this patiently borne, and daily undergone during

ing a series of years, there was but little room for other acts of mortification, particularly when the nature of her employment was a constant crucifixion of bodily indulgence. But the most eminent Saints in every age of the Church were as much distinguished by austerity to themselves, as they were by gentleness to others; and therefore, however the fashionable world may wish to expunge penitential works from the Gospel of Jesus Christ, his true servants will always faithfully practise them. Miss Nagle's private austerities were so uncommonly severe, and therefore so much more likely to excite astonishment than imitation, I shall not here detail them. I shall only tell you, that in the language of St. Paul, I could literally say, *I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection; lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become reprobate.**

Her zeal was so ardent, that those who were most intimate with her do not hesitate to declare, that were it practicable, she would cheerfully have gone to the very extremities of the earth to promote the salvation of her fellow-creatures. Hence the most sensible pleasure she enjoyed in this life, as she secured her sisters in Religion, was when she saw the greatest crowds of children about her receiving her instructions. It was under this virtue she sunk. The decline, with which her boys' Schools were threatened for want of means to support them, urged her to request the interference of Gentlemen, who

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* 1 Epist. Corinth. Chap. 9, Verse 27.

ere so kind, as to collect contributions for her during some time; but perceiving, that soon after this their exertions did not continue to answer her first hopes, she undertook by herself the disgusting solicitation. She went, I may say, from door to door through this extensive City, begging a support for these Schools, which her own exhausted finances could no longer administer; exposing herself to the rude refusals of many, and to the malignant sarcasms of as many more, in hopes of obtaining from some humane benefactors their aid towards a Charity so useful. But a circumstance disclosed only by her death, throws new admiration upon this last act of fortitude. It is, that such prominent and angry excrescences were then observed upon the soles of her feet, that it is matter of surprise how she could even stand upon them, but surely much more astonishing, how for the three last years of her life, she could walk so much and so constantly!

It was her zeal for the salvation of souls, and the sense she had of the dangers, which usually attend the death-bed of aged poverty, that prompted her to erect a sort of Alms-house near her own, where poor old women may spin out their last thread, and be properly assisted when quitting this world. One institution more she fixed her heart on, and would have strenuously endeavoured to effect it, had God been pleased to prolong the term of her life: this was a receptacle for those unhappy Females, who, led in the ways of shame and iniquity, would return to God by repentance, if they had only a place

to receive them. She wisely supposed, that pro-
 regulations would soon put their sincerity to the test
 and that their daily labour might be made to furnish
 sufficient means of support. But her hour is come.
 After so laborious a course, and such unwearied
 efforts to promote the glory of God, and to diffuse
 the saving knowledge of him, is it not time to deliver
 her from her fatigues, and to receive the faithful
 servant into the joy of her Lord? Yes; a mortal
 sickness, brought on by these very fatigues, an-
 nounces the approach of death: a general languor,
 a heavy oppression, loss of rest and appetite, a
 distressing cough are his harbingers; or rather a
 resignation, a longing to be with God, an un-
 derstanding confidence in the merits of her Redeemer, en-
 creasing still at every moment, declare that the Bride-
 groom is at hand.

Where now is anxiety, where are confusion and
 dismay, the ordinary attendants of expiring wor-
 lings? Where is that ingenuity that must announce
 to them the unwelcome news of their speedy dis-
 solution? Or these suggestions of their pious friends
 conveying sentiments to them, which their hearts
 perhaps never knew? No, no! resources of that kind
 are not for her: fortified by the last Sacrament
 which she receives with the tenderest compunction,
 her heart is fixed on Heaven, where her treasure
 she awaits with steady fortitude the signal for her
 departure! Her little community assembled about her
 learning from her how to die, as they had learned
 by her conduct how to live, unite their sighs with

's, pray for her victory in this last conflict, and commend with grateful tears her precious soul to God. They implore her benediction, and her advice—she gives it to them—*love each other as have hitherto done.* Heavenly sentence! And with the life it concluded!—She is no more.*

Gentlemen, had you been present at that affecting scene, what do you imagine would have been, I will say her advice, for her humility would not have presumed to advise you, but what would have been her last request, her dying petition? Can there be a doubt but her Schools would have been the subject of it? Those Schools, which she had so much at heart, which she had lived and died for, upon which she had expended her substance, and herself! I most earnestly conjure you, Gentlemen, she would have said, favour with your protection, these poor young help-creatures. Your charity is on record—your compassion for the poor is noted throughout this kingdom—your humane Associations for the Relief and discharge of Debtors—for the care of the Sick—for support of Industry among reduced Tradesmen—abound much to your honour, and will serve you to the last day. But to make men virtuous, to rescue them from the dismal consequences of ignorance in this life, and in the next, is surely of more important advantage. In every concern the beginning should be particularly attended; but in no concern so

She died the 26th day of April 1784, in the 56th year of age.

so much as in forming the morals of mankind: the hearts of children are susceptible of every impression, and if the general corruption, which they are already so prone to, be not counteracted by an early sense of Religion, of what they owe to God, and to the neighbour, of future rewards, and punishments, the rising generation will be more vicious than their fathers, and their own posterity more vicious still than themselves. All other public Charities are eminently contained in this one: for as an early Christian education will make men honest, sober, temperate, and regular, it will in a great degree make Jails, Loans, Hospitals, and Poor-houses unnecessary. In one word, Gentlemen, without an early virtuous education, it is morally impossible to enter into the kingdom of Heaven, and under the influence of such an education there are the best grounded hopes of arriving at a blessed immortality. I am now closing my eyes for ever on this world; but had I another life at my disposal, I would readily sacrifice it in for good a cause—I have effected two establishments in your City, which future generations, as well as the present, will, I hope, derive many benefits from—that, for which I now solicit you, considering what was due to my family, I had not wherewithal to bring about—with my dying breath I recommend it, confiding in your humanity for the success; and may our common Father, who takes as done to himself what is done for the smallest of these little ones, that believe in him, reward you for that Charity—may he crown you with Mercy here, and with eternal Glory hereafter.—Had you been present,
Gentlemen,

Gentlemen, to receive her last words, they would certainly have been to this purpose, and your veneration for her would have as certainly assented to them. The most dispassionate review of this great woman's life will discern, that she was animated with the spirit of God.—A term of thirty years spent in the practice of the most humane, disinterested, and laborious works for the welfare of her fellow-creatures—distinguished by the most sincere humility—the most exalted piety—uniform—steadily—progressive in perfection—sealed with the sterling mark of final perseverance—authorises us to suppose, that the Almighty presided in the councils of her heart. And as it was always her desire, that some permanent Institution for the instruction of poor Boys should take place amongst us—as she herself unable to effect it, relied firmly on you for its support, it follows with more than probability, that if you take up the business where death forced her to leave it off, you do no more in that case, than God absolutely wills you should do. Indeed, Gentlemen, abstracting from the reasons for it, which your own good sense will abundantly point out, it seems to be a tribute justly due to so great a Character. Shall such a Sun go down without glowing in the clouds it leaves behind? Shall the shades of oblivion thicken around her memory without even a twilight of gratitude? Shall her fame, and her remains be entombed together?—You will never consent to it.—Let a monument be forthwith erected to her—I mean not a monument of stone, nor yet a monument merely in your hearts—her merits are already inscribed there—

there—but a monument, which time shall not impair—an Evergreen of Virtue in the vineyard of the Poor, ever budding, ripening, flourishing in the young, ever mature, venerable and productive in the old. Planted by herself, let it be watered by you—the Almighty will give the increase—*he shall send forth his Spirit, and renew the face of our Land.* Do this Gentlemen—begin the Work—adopt this very day and within these walls a resolution so worthy of you.—May God in his mercy reward you for it—may you flourish under the shade of your own tree, and be wreathed with its bloom in the Kingdom of Heaven.—AMEN.

A. D. 1790.

F I N I S.

